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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9979
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2243
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0679
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2648
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2028
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000972

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [PINR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: SMALL PRO-U.S. DEMONSTRATION AT EMBASSY LEADS TO
ONE ARREST

REF: BISHKEK 968

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Classified By: CDA Lee Litzenberger, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: A small, unsanctioned demonstration took place in front of the Embassy the morning of July 30. Approximately 15-20 demonstrators carried signs in support of the U.S. airbase in Kyrgyzstan. After demonstration organizer Tursun Islamov presented two letters to the Embassy, the police requested that the demonstrators re-locate across the street from the Embassy compound. The police escorted the demonstrators across the street. Following a minor scuffle, the police detained Islamov's son, Alisher, who was subsequently convicted of minor administrative offenses, fined, and sentenced to five days in custody. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) The Embassy first learned of a possible demonstration through an anonymous phone call on July 28. The caller claimed that there would be a demonstration in front of the Embassy at 11:00 am on July 30. The caller provided no information about the reason for the demonstration or who was organizing it. RSO contacted Kyrgyz law enforcement authorities, who had no information about a planned demonstration at the Embassy. On July 30 at approximately 1:00 am, the Embassy received another anonymous call warning there would be a "terrorist incident" at the "meeting" on Monday. RSO alerted Kyrgyz law enforcement authorities about the threat and arranged for additional security measures at the Embassy for the morning of July 30 (reftel).

3. (SBU) At 11:00 am on July 30, a group of 15-20 demonstrators gathered in the parking area in front of the Embassy compound. Approximately 10 journalists also were present. The demonstrators carried a Kyrgyz flag and an upside down American flag. After several minutes, they put the American flag right side up. The demonstrators carried several signs in Russian and English supporting the presence

of the U.S. airbase in Kyrgyzstan as a "guarantor of security in Central Asia against terrorism."

¶4. (C) The demonstrators informed local embassy guards that they wanted to present a letter to the Embassy. At approximately 11:15, RSO approached demonstration leader, Tursun Islamov. They were immediately surrounded by journalists asking questions, making it difficult for them to talk. RSO then invited Islamov briefly onto the Embassy compound. Islamov delivered two letters, one from the human rights organization "Democracy" and the second on behalf of the Uyghur community in Kyrgyzstan, expressing support for the U.S. airbase. RSO then urged Islamov to move his group away from the Embassy compound for safety reasons. Islamov responded that the group would not move and they were not afraid for their safety.

¶5. (SBU) At approximately 11:30, the police requested that the demonstrators re-locate to an open area across the street from the Embassy compound. The police then escorted them across the street, pushing and walking arm-in-arm with some of the demonstrators, but using hand control techniques only (there were no/no batons or any other use of force). There was a minor scuffle between the police and Islamov's son, Alisher. By 11:45, the group was across the street, and around 12:15, the crowd dispersed.

¶6. (C) Following the demonstration, the police detained Alisher Islamov. Islamov was charged with "minor hooliganism" and ignoring the lawful demands of a police officer, both administrative (not criminal) offenses. According to police sources, Alisher was convicted of the offenses at a hearing late on July 30, fined, and sentenced to five days in custody.

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¶7. (C) Tursun Islamov told us on July 31 that the police had provoked the scuffle with his son by insulting his wife, who was also present at the demonstration. Islamov said that Alisher had acted to defend his mother, but had used "vile" language. Islamov said he was considering retaining an attorney to represent his son.

¶8. (U) Press coverage of the demonstration was limited. One local television station reported on the demonstration during its evening news broadcast, saying that it had been organized by the Uyghurs and showing film of the scuffle. In a short article, the state news agency reported that administrative charges were being pressed against one of the participants.

¶9. (C) COMMENT: The July 30 pro-airbase demonstration was similar to the June 2 anti-base picket at the embassy: a small crowd, a few signs, and over in an hour or so without incident. While it was heartening that the demonstration turned out to be in support of the base, we wonder about the judgment of the organizer(s). We have had contact in the past with Tursun Islamov as a leader of the Uyghur community in Kyrgyzstan, but we do not understand why he would decide to hold a demonstration at the embassy without getting official permission or informing the embassy ahead of time. We will follow up with Kyrgyz law enforcement authorities to check on the status of Alisher Islamov. END COMMENT.
LITZENBERGER